

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1           1.     An image forming device comprising:  
2           an interface adapted to communicate with a communication medium external  
3 of the image forming device;  
4           imaging circuitry configured to use an imaging consumable to form hard  
5 images;  
6           a sensor configured to monitor a status of the imaging consumable; and  
7           processing circuitry coupled with the sensor and configured to generate a  
8 message indicating the status of the imaging consumable and to synchronize with  
9 another image forming device to control a timing of a communication of the  
10 message externally of the image forming device using the interface.

1           2.     The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing  
2 circuitry is configured to detect a predetermined moment in time to synchronize  
3 with the another image forming device.

1           3.     The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the imaging circuitry  
2 is configured to print hard images upon media.

1           4.     The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the interface is  
2 adapted to communicate with the communication medium comprising a packet-  
3 switched network, and the processing circuitry is configured to formulate the  
4 message comprising an e-mail message.

1           5.     The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing  
2 circuitry is configured to generate the message comprising a status message  
3 including one status.

1           6.     The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing  
2     circuitry is configured to generate the message comprising a composite message  
3     including a plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

1           7.     An image forming device comprising:  
2             an interface adapted to communicate with a communication medium external  
3     of the image forming device;  
4             imaging circuitry configured to use an imaging consumable to form hard  
5     images;  
6             a sensor configured to monitor a status of the imaging consumable; and  
7             processing circuitry coupled with the sensor and configured to generate a  
8     message indicating the status of the imaging consumable and to communicate the  
9     message externally of the image forming device using the interface at a  
10    predetermined moment in time.

1           8.     The device in accordance with claim 7 wherein the imaging circuitry  
2     is configured to print hard images upon media.

1           9.     The device in accordance with claim 7 wherein the interface is  
2     adapted to communicate with the communication medium comprising a packet-  
3     switched network, and the processing circuitry is configured to formulate the  
4     message comprising an e-mail message.

1           10.    The device in accordance with claim 7 wherein the processing  
2     circuitry is configured to generate the message comprising a composite message  
3     including a plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

1 11. An image forming device comprising:  
2 an interface adapted to communicate with a communication medium;  
3 imaging circuitry configured to consume a plurality of imaging consumables  
4 to form hard images;  
5 a plurality of sensors configured to monitor respective statuses of the  
6 imaging consumables; and  
7 processing circuitry coupled with the sensors and configured to generate a  
8 composite message indicating statuses of the imaging consumables, and to forward  
9 the composite message to the interface for communication externally of the image  
10 forming device.

1 12. The device in accordance with claim 11 wherein the processing  
2 circuitry is configured to synchronize with another image forming device to control  
3 the timing of the communication of the composite message.

1 13. The device in accordance with claim 12 wherein the processing  
2 circuitry is configured to send the composite message at a predetermined moment  
3 in time to synchronize with the another image forming device.

1 14. The device in accordance with claim 11 wherein the imaging circuitry  
2 is configured to print hard images upon media.

1 15. The device in accordance with claim 11 wherein the interface is  
2 adapted to communicate with the communication medium comprising a packet-  
3 switched network, and the processing circuitry is configured to formulate the  
4 composite message comprising an e-mail message.

1 16. The device in accordance with claim 11 further comprising storage  
2 circuitry and the processing circuitry is configured to process signals from the  
3 sensors and to forward statuses responsive to the signals to the storage circuitry  
4 for storage.

1 17. A method of facilitating ordering of an imaging consumable  
2 comprising:

3 providing an image forming device configured to use the imaging consumable  
4 to form hard images;

5 monitoring a status of the imaging consumable;

6 generating a message indicating the status of the imaging consumable  
7 responsive to the monitoring;

8 synchronizing with another image forming device; and

9 communicating the message externally of the image forming device  
10 responsive to the synchronizing.

1 18. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the synchronizing  
2 comprises detecting a predetermined moment in time.

1 19. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the providing  
2 comprises providing the image forming device configured to print hard images upon  
3 media.

1 20. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the communicating  
2 comprises communicating the message comprising an e-mail message.

1 21. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the generating  
2 comprises generating the message comprising a composite message including a  
3 plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

1           22. A method of facilitating ordering of an imaging consumable  
2 comprising:

3           providing an image forming device configured to use the imaging consumable  
4 to form hard images;

5           monitoring a status of the imaging consumable;

6           generating a message indicating the status of the imaging consumable  
7 responsive to the monitoring; and

8           communicating the message externally of the image forming device at a  
9 predetermined moment in time.

1           23. The method in accordance with claim 22 wherein the communicating  
2 comprises communicating the message comprising an e-mail message.

1           24. The method in accordance with claim 22 wherein the generating  
2 comprises generating the message comprising a composite message including a  
3 plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

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